

4701 Sangamore Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20016
May 4, 1981

The Editors
"The Asylum"
c/o Jack Collins
2840 Indiana Avenue
South Gate, California 90280

Gentlemen:

While attending the ANA Convention in Cincinnati last August I picked up Vol. 1, No. 1 of a new publication "The Asylum." Reading the objectives of this publication, I noted they were very lofty. This new publication seemed to be something that I may have an interest in as I believe that I have made a contribution to the field of numismatic literature. I did not, however, "sign up."

At the recent convention of Early American Coppers Club, Inc., who incidentally publishes the leading numismatic publication "Penny-Wise," I was given a Xerox copy of the article "a Review of Half-Cent Literature" from No. 2 & 3 of "The Asylum." After careful reading of this article, I am of the opinion that the lofty objections so profoundly set forth in issue No. 1 are in fact so low that they are beneath whale dung on the ocean floor.

My conclusion is not based on the subject matter of the article, nor do I have any quarrel with the named author of the article, but it is the editors note which caused me to reach this conclusion. In my opinion the editor has breached the tenents of fair play with his note. He has continued a pattern of foul play which I and many many others have observed over the 10 year period since I took "pen in hand" to do something about the 20 year hiatus for the publication of a standard reference on half cents. I am referring to the fact that from certain self-proclaimed and non-productive "numismatic literary scholars" there is a constant refusal to even acknowledge the publication of AMERICAN HALF CENTS in 1971!! The editor continues this charade in his note! Since many of his potential readers have knowledge of AMERICAN HALF CENTS, the editor attempts to justify his bias by stating that the article was written "circa 1966."

A careful reading of the article contradicts the editors caveat and leads the reader to the conclusion that either the editor is a liar in naming the author, or as an alternative the aledged author was a seer. This conclusion which we arrived at while at the EAC meeting is based on the following excerpt from the article on page 36.

"Ebenezer Gilbert completed a very uneven manuscript The Gilbert book long REMAINED (emphisis supplied) the standard reference, despite lacking a rational emission sequence, lacking reasonable historical material, lacking a usable rarity scale, and having inaccurate descriptions, typographical errors which in some cases destroyed the meaning of the sentences containing them, and plate errors."

The Editors
"The Asylum"
page 2

In 1966 Gilbert was the standard reference on half cents, so how could the named author use the past tense for something that was in the future? His concluding paragraph on page 38 of the article makes it clear he did not consider the Bowers & Rudy work to be the standard reference on half cents.

We also noted that all the lacks and errors of the Gilbert book are not present in my book. If the editor of "The Asylum" were an editor with some knowledge rather than self-proclaimed expertise and not a liar and a bigot he would have indicated the existance of the PRESENT standard work on half cents. However, he did not do this. To do so would have been in keeping with the lofty objectives of "The Asylum" ... The editor belongs to the depths to which these objectives have sunk. He should be there also as a coprophagist.

Very truly yours,

Roger S. Cohen, Jr.

P.S. For a 1966 article the statement in regard to the LATE Joseph Brobston must be a 'typographical error.' If memory serves me correctly, his date of death was in 1972!

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ANA-LIFE MEMBER
PNG #87



Ext. 3308

From the desk of

JOHN WRIGHT

Date 13 Dec. '81

Dear Roger,

The enclosed letter and card just came to me. A copy of my reply is also enclosed, so consider the puzzle as your meat.

I got a few giggles out of your rapier-thrusts in The Asylum (both given and taker). Both you and Collins are a bit more blunt than I'm used to seeing.

Two points might be of use for future episodes (if you really intend to persist in stooping to that level)...

1. In parrying with an Editor, check your copy very carefully at different times for grammar, spelling, clarity-- take all the time you need to not provide him the least chink for counterattack on anything besides your specific points. Jack blew a smokescreen around your spelling and made points without saying a word.
2. Don't tangle directly with Walter. He's a grand master at the use of words. By being careful you could dismantle Jack-- he reacts emotionally. Not so Walter.

Your friend,

12/28/82

George F. Kolke.
23881 Via Fabricante #511
Mission Viejo CA 92691

Dear George,

Put on your hat as an editor of "The Asylum" I recently went over the last issue and noted a review done by a J.M. of the Sweated - Green Book on US Commemorative Coins. Do you think he or she could review my book? I will be glad to send a review copy.

I assume that no review has been done of my Second Edition for a number of reasons. I received a letter dated October 4, 1982 in regard to the N.B.S. but have heard nothing since. I have assumed that it was the intention of the editors to review both books on Half Cent simultaneously. However it's been almost a year since my book was released. I know of the ~~delays and problems~~ problems in getting "The Asylum" printed even before Jack's unfortunate series of heart attacks but have assumed that the N.B.S. is going forward despite this handicap. Well you please write me in regard to my request.

1-7-83

DEAR ROGER,

Sincerely,

I AM NO LONGER EDITOR OF THE "ASYLUM". HAVE NOT BEEN SO FOR PAST COUPLE OF ISSUES.
I AM HELPING WITH CURRENT ISSUE,
DUE OUT SHORTLY. BUT EXPECT
JACK WILL BE BACK AT THE HELM
FOR FUTURE ISSUES. I WILL MENTION
YOUR REQUEST TO HIM. I BELIEVE
THE "JM" REVIEW WAS SENT IN UNSOLICITED.
PERHAPS YOU COULD HAVE ONE OF THE KNOWLEDGEABLE
HALF CENT PEOPLE WRITE A REVIEW AND SEND
IT TO JACK. I WILL SUGGEST TO HIM THAT
HE INCLUDE IT IN A FUTURE ISSUE. BEST WISHES
FOR THE NEW YEAR.

REGARDS,

George

JANUARY 1, 1983

TO:

Dear

In accordance with the terms of our agreement in regard to the publication date of:

"Walter Breen's" Encyclopedia of United States Half Cents
1793 - 1857

Sponsered by:

aMericAn iNstitUte of numismatic REsearch

This is to advise you that this "magnum opus" has not been published despite an original verbal "threat" of January 1982 which was followed by publication dates of:

February 1982
March 1982
May 1982
June 1982
July 1982
August 1982
ad nauseam as for the last 30 years ! !

Please make a \$35.00 donation to your favorite numismatic organization-

Contracts similar to the 1982 one will be accepted for a January 1984 publication date ! ! Anyone willing?

Sincerely,

The person who knew!

Sooth Sayer
Sooth Sayer

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(Jack Collins, President)

proudly announces

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of

UNITED STATES HALF CENTS

1793-1857

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*Oops! Famous
Last Words
Of 1982*

JANUARY 1 1982

To:

Dear:

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF OUR
AGREEMENT IN REGARD TO THE PUBLICATION
DATE OF:

"WALTER BREEN'S" ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF UNITED STATES HALF
CENTS 1793-1857

SPONSORED BY:

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF NUMISMATIC RESEARCH

THIS IS TO ADVISE YOU THAT THIS "MAJESTIC
opus" HAS NOT BEEN PUBLISHED DESPITE
AN ORIGINAL VERBAL PROMISE OF JANUARY
1982 WHICH WAS FOLLOWED PUBLISHED DATES
OF:

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MARCH 1982	JULY 1982
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WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR A JANUARY 1982
PUBLICATION DATE!! ANYONE WILLING?

SINCERELY

THE PERSON WHO
KNEW!

South Soper

26 January, 1983

DEAR ROGER:

I AM SORRY TO HAVE TAKEN SO LONG TO ANSWER YOU BUT I HAVE BEEN SLAVING NIGHT AND DAY TO RAISE THE \$35.00 TO DONATE TO MY FAVORITE NUMISMATIC ORGANIZATION, AS PER YOUR INSTRUCTIONS AND THAT HORRIBLE AGREEMENT I GOT MYSELF INTO. MOTHER ALWAYS TOLD ME NOT TO GAMBLE -- I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED. FIRST, IT WAS THE TRANSMISSION, THEN THE WIFE GOT SICK, THEN ME, THEN HER AGAIN. \$30,000. IN MEDICAL BILLS, OH WOE IS ME, WHEN WILL IT EVER END, AND NOW THIS, THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMELS BACK. I HAVE ALREADY SOLD MY UNBORN CHILD INTO SLAVERY, MAGGIE IS WORKING DOUBLE SHIFTS AND I, well I'm kind of taking it easy here, having sworn to myself never to put in a full day's labor until the publication of the Encyclopedia. OK, so I lost the bet, but I still think that the material will reach publication. I'm not sure enough to bet again, just reasonably sure.

The \$35. went to the American Numismatic Society, my favorite numismatic organization (next to myself).

Tis a pleasure doing business with you, sir.

Best wishes from a gamblaholic,

Ron

P.S. you might be interested that in addressing my envelope and referring to my address book that your name holds the envied position directly beneath that of Jack Collins!

4701 Sangamore Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20816
September 27, 1983

N. Neil Harris, Editor
The Numismatist
P. O. Box 2366
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Dear Mr. Harris:

Page 1821 of the September 1983 issue of "The Numismatist" provided me with a good laugh. So, Walter Breen is going to put out a book on California fractional gold, based on research conducted by him and others, plus the notification we will have BREEN reference numbers. From my experience, Breen's "research" is mostly by others with little or no recognition of others.

History has a way of repeating itself and I enclose a copy of a page from the May 1952 !! Numismatist in regard to another book to be authored. Here it is 31 years later and the book promised still is not out despite another flurry of activity about 2 years ago.

The experience of Half Cent Collectors with "Breen" reference numbers has been ludicrous. Breen wrote catalogues with "Breen" numbers, but since the book was never available to the general public, no one, except a few favorites even knew what he meant.

I am aware of the purpose for including such material in "The Numismatist" however, in view of past history a little judicious editing seems to be in order.

Sincerely,

Roger S. Cohen, Jr.
ANA #14814